



### Lincoln Highlights Rural School Needs with Leading Education Advocates

U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln today met with leaders of national education and afterschool organizations to discuss rural education issues as part of her "Rural Roundtable" meeting series. Lincoln serves as Chair of Rural Outreach for the Senate Democratic Caucus and convened this meeting to further highlight the needs of rural America.

"A key component to building stronger rural communities is ensuring that our children are meeting their full academic potential," said Lincoln "In order to do so, we have to provide our rural schools, community colleges, and afterschool partners with the resources and tools they need to help students achieve a bright future. Today's meeting was an opportunity to bring together my Senate colleagues with leaders in the education community to discuss how we can give our country's 14 million rural students a quality education that will help them compete in a global economy."

As Chair of Rural Outreach for Senate Leadership and as a member of the Senate Rural Education Caucus, Lincoln has consistently fought for policies that strengthen the rural education system. This Congress, she introduced the Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support Act, which helps place school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists in rural and low-income school districts. Lincoln also introduced the Investment in After-School Programs Act, which helps create and strengthen rural after-school programs. She is a co-sponsor of the Rural Education Achievement Program, which is the only dedicated federal funding stream to aid rural school districts in overcoming the increased expenses caused by geographic isolation.

Earlier this year, Lincoln received the National Rural Education Association's HERO Award. The annual award is given to one U.S. Senator and one U.S. Representative for their support of rural schools and sponsorship of legislation key to improving rural education. She also was presented the HERO Award in 2006.

Participants in today's roundtable included leaders of The National Education Association, Rural Community College Alliance, Rural School and Community Trust, National School Boards Association, National Parent Teacher Association, National Afterschool Association, National 4-H Council, National Rural Education Association, Afterschool Alliance, Organizations Concerned About Rural Education, National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition, Rebuild America's Schools and the National Indian Education Association.



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